

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:240
ANSWERED ON:27.02.2007
FREE TRADE ZONES
Scindia Shri Jyotiraditya Madhavrao

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the progress so far been made in the formation of a Free Trade Zone of 16 Asian and Pacific nations towards formation of a landmark East Asia Economic Block including India; and

(b) the role played by India in the process?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) and (b) At the first East Asian Summit in December, 2005, India proposed a Pan Asian Free Trade Agreement as a starting block for economic integration of East Asian countries. This proposal comprises the ten ASEAN countries of Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. and the six countries of Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand and covers trade in goods, common rules of origin, services, investments, intellectual property etc. A similar proposal for Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA) was initiated by Japan in 2006. Japan has also proposed setting up of an Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA). The ERIA will facilitate economic community building through policy oriented studies and other activities. India has extended full support for the initiative of ASEAN +6 CEPEA and ERIA.